



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Members

Karen Kennedy, Neighborhood
Pamela Burton, Neighborhood
Marvin Fox, Neighborhood
Jay Hirsh, Wells Avenue
Holly Ryan, Ward 8 City Council
Barney Heath, Newton -Planning
Devra Bailin-Newton-Planning
Jeff Cournoyer, UMass at Mt. Ida
Stephen Reynolds, UMass at Mt. Ida

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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Neighborhood Council UMass Amherst, Mount Ida Campus

Meeting Summary

Date: Friday, October 30, 2020

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Zoom Conference

Members Present: Karen Kennedy, Pamela Burton,
Marvin Fox, Jeff Cournoyer, and
Stephen Reynolds, Devra Bailin

Others present: Kathryn Ellis and Dana Hanson

1. General Campus Updates

Jeff brought the Council up to date on the sign issue. The University worked out the utility issues with the City which were preventing completion of the landscaping work around the entrance sign. Although they were unable to install the stone wall around the sign, the area will be fully landscaped. Jeff shared a copy of the final landscaping plan and will forward a copy to the members. At his insistence, the landscaping will be done before winter. Pam noted that some of the species are not indigenous and agreed to discuss further with Jeff offline.

Jeff apologized that he had failed to mention at our last meeting that UMass Amherst was completing a survey in the fall. He assured the members that no work is being proposed but they needed to make sure the property lines were accurately reflected. He noted that there had been numerous land swaps that were not adequately detailed. He also noted that they will be doing a topographical map using drones once the leaves are down. The drone will not leave the bounds of the property; it is anticipated this will occur in late November.

Jeff noted that the fall semester, with 50 students on campus together with a few commuters for the Vet Tech, has gone smoothly. They are testing the students twice a week and faculty once a week. There will be no students living on campus from the Monday before Thanksgiving to the last week in January, when students return for the spring semester. Karen asked if members of the public can get tested on campus. Jeff and Steve noted that there is excess testing capacity, but they are not presently allowed to do retail testing. They are looking into it.

Jeff explained that they do anticipate an increase in students living on campus in the spring but do not yet have an idea of how many students are interested. (UMass Amherst is surveying students now.) Jeff noted that they could accommodate up to 350 students within their COVID-19 protocols for the campus. Steve noted that Mount Ida had 830 students

on campus. Jeff assured the members that UMass Amherst will continue to test all students twice a week in the spring.

Jeff also noted that he had forwarded the Strategic Plan to everyone and should anyone have any questions, they should call.

2. Neighborhood Updates

Karen asked who was using the athletic fields. Steve explained that Boston Bolts are renting the field and that they used Mount Ida's fields for over ten years. Jeff added that all tenants have to submit COVID-19 plans and abide by State guidance for their activity on campus. Parents are dropping children off and there have not been any issues.

Pam noted that the only complaints, aside from earlier concerns about the surveying, she hears relate to the clear cutting being done for the Church. Karen noted that many of her Dorothy Road neighbors have installed trees and other landscaping as a result. She asked if Pam had that neighborhood on her email list; Karen will forward the information to Pam.

Karen commented that Jeff is doing a great job keeping the neighborhood informed and they appreciate it. Dana noted that having periodic meetings means people can be kept up to date, thereby minimizing issues by allowing early discussion of concerns.

3. City Updates

No discussion other than that covered above.

4. Future Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date

It was determined that the next meeting should be in January so the Council can be updated on what the spring semester will look like. No items were suggested for the next meeting, but members were encouraged to let Devra know. Devra will coordinate with UMass for an available date and get back to the Council.